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MOUNTAIN LAKES WILD AREA

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WINEMA NATIONAL FOREST



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
2. U.S. FOREST SERVICE
PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION



MOUNTAIN LAKES WILD AREA

Perhaps one of the most accessible areas designated as a Wild Area is located on the Klamath District of the Winema National Forest. The Mountain Lakes Wild Area is a rugged primitive area comprising all of T. 37 S., R. 6 E., W. M., in south central Oregon. Most of this rugged mountainous area was established as the Mountain Lakes Primitive Area in 1930, with an acreage of 13,444 acres. In 1940, the area was increased to its present size, 23,071 acres, and designated as a Wild Area. The area is bounded on all sides by high mountains. The highest point within the area is Aspen Butte, with an elevation of 8,208 feet. Other high points include Mt. Harriman, 7,979 feet; Crater Mountain, 7,785 feet; Greylock Mountain, 7,747 feet; and Whiteface Peak, 7,706 feet. In the basin created within the rim of these high peaks are found the numerous mountain lakes from which the area derives its name. The lowest elevations are approximately 5,000 feet. The many mountain lakes, noted for their beautifully colored water bounded by green timbered shorelines, have been stocked with eastern brook and rainbow trout. The area serves as a haven for the wildlife of the region. During the summer months, the area is inhabited by black-tailed deer, and in the fall of the year, the lakes are used by wild ducks and geese.



Looking N. E. down Moss Creek Canyon across Lake Harriette



Lake Harriette



Photo by Mike Hayden



Skyline view of Mountain Lakes Wild Area looking west across Upper Klamath Lake

Fishing in Lake Como

WILDLIFE

During the summer months, the area is inhabited by numerous black-tailed deer. Many small fur-bearing animals, bear, and coyotes are often seen. Early in 1961, the Oregon State Game Commission, in cooperation with the Forest Service, released 11 fisher in the area. Fisher are natural enemies of porcupines and have been known to help control them.

CLIMATE

Two-thirds of the area is over 6,000 feet in elevation. Precipitation is largely in the form of snow, which reaches depths of 5 to 20 feet. Thunder showers occur quite frequently during July and August. Temperatures vary annually from minus 30 to plus 95 degrees. Frosts could occur during practically every month of the year.

VEGETATION

Approximately 50% of the area has a heavy stand of mountain hemlock in mixture with Shasta red fir. This timber is found primarily between the elevation of 6,000 to 7,000 feet. About 20% of the area is covered with the alpine type, containing smaller-sized alpine fir, white pine, and lodgepole pine. This type is practically all above 7,000 feet. Meadow grass and several species of wild flowers are found along the lower creek drainages and basins. Soils are very rocky and shallow, with numerous rock slides extending over the area.

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Meadow grass in lower elevations is welcomed after a day's pack



Aspen Butte from Mystic Lake



Paragon Lake

The heavily used recreation area at Lake of the Woods is less than two miles from the west boundary of the Mountain Lakes Wild Area. A trail entering the Wild Area from the west connects these two recreation attractions. Other trails into the area may be reached by dirt or graveled roads that leave the paved Dead Indian road (between Klamath Falls and Ashland) at several points.



Whiteface Peak



Como Lake as viewed from Varney Creek Trail

MOUNTAIN LAKES WILD AREA

WINEMA NATIONAL FOREST
1964



LEGEND

- FOREST BOUNDARY
- WILD AREA BOUNDARY
- ROAD, PAVED
- SECONDARY ROAD ALL SURFACE
- ROAD, DIRT
- ROAD, PRIMITIVE
- PRIMARY WILDERNESS TRAILS
- OTHER TRAILS FOR PUBLIC USE
- ▲ DISTRICT RANGER STATION
- GUARD STATION
- ▲ IMPROVED RECREATION AREA
- CAMP SPOT
- TRAIL SHELTER
- F FORAGE
- △ LOOKOUT STATION
- DRY LAKE
- NATIONAL FOREST LAND

COMPILED IN THE REGIONAL OFFICE, PORTLAND,
OREGON 1963 BASED ON 1962 FOREST SERIES
MAP

USFS R6

TAKE CARE OF YOUR WILDERNESS

This alpine wilderness is in a very delicate state of ecological balance. Any careless act by man would surely result in the destruction of such areas in their natural state. It would take nature many years to repair such damages.

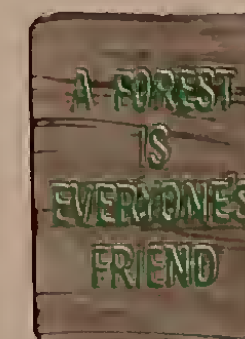
1. Be careful with fire.
 - a. Do not smoke while hiking or riding, but rather stop at a safe place and extinguish your smoke before leaving.
 - b. Carefully extinguish your campfire with water. Do not bury live fire with dirt.
 - c. Law requires each party traveling with pack string to carry a water container with 1 gallon or more capacity, a 36-inch shovel with 8-inch blade, and an ax with at least a two-pound head and 26-inch handle.
2. Be good campers.
 - a. Keep and leave a clean camp.
 - b. Burn your garbage; cans should be burned and mashed and carried back out, along with other unburnable materials.
 - c. Plan camp sanitation.
 - d. Keep horses outside of camp areas.
 - e. Graze your pack and saddle animals wisely and avoid over-use of meadows. Carry grain or pelletized horse feed.
3. Use of motor vehicles and other motorized equipment is prohibited within the Wild Area.



WHAT TO DO IF LOST

The real danger in the mountains when lost is not man-eating bears or snuggling snakes, but it is yourself — PANIC. Panic, someone once said, "is when your heart is in your mouth, and your brains in your heels."

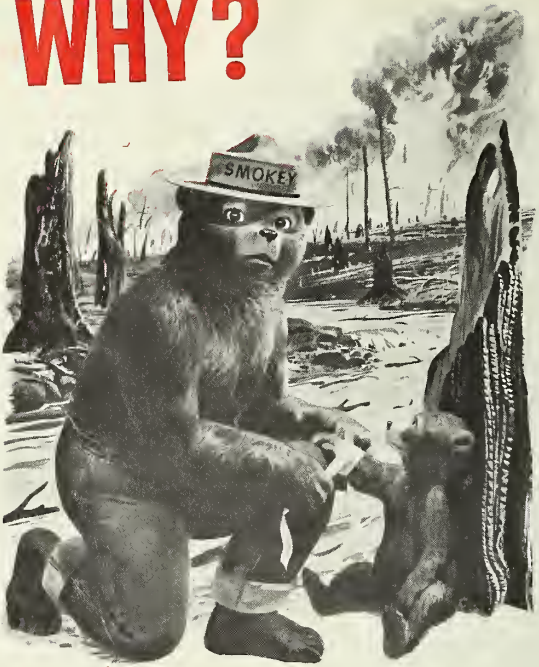
1. Keep calm. Do not walk aimlessly. Trust your map and compass. Make a camp near water. Remember, without water you can live only two days; without food you can live two or three weeks.
2. To find your position, climb to a place where you can see the surrounding terrain.
3. If injured, keep calm. Stay where you are, clear an area down to mineral soil and build a signal fire and put green boughs on it. You will be found!
4. Three signals of any kind, either audible or visible, is the nationwide SOS call in the mountains. Signal by three blasts from a whistle or three shots from a gun; three regulated puffs of smoke, or three flashes from a mirror or flashlight. Repeat at regular intervals. When the sign is recognized by a search party, it will be answered by two signals. Use the SOS call only when actually in need of help.



5. Remember, Do Not Panic!



WHY?



remember—
only you can **PREVENT FOREST FIRES!**

